



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Norfolk District

Buckroe Beach



FACT SHEET

May 2004

Phase 3 Study to Begin

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun the third phase of the munitions response effort at Buckroe Beach. This phase will include a 1-2 day sampling effort to confirm that no explosive residue exists from the munitions that were found and removed from the beach. This study will also evaluate any remaining munitions risk and the long-term safety measures needed at Buckroe Beach. The Army Corps will be conducting community interviews from May 3 through May 31 to solicit public input for this study. Anyone interested in participating is encouraged to complete a questionnaire that can be found at www.ce-com.com/buckroe or to call Sandra Chaloux at 800-232-7074 to participate in a brief telephone interview.

2003 Munitions Removals

The Army Corps field team found and safely removed a total of 19 munitions items during the Phase 1 and 2 investigations in 2003. These items included 45mm, 75mm, and 76mm empty and sandfilled practice rounds found 18 to 30 inches below the surface. None of these items were deemed to contain explosive materials.



*Army Corps field crew
working in shallow surf*

On September 18, 2003, Hurricane Isabel struck causing major beach erosion and reducing the beach from 26 acres to 19 acres. A team of U.S. Army Corps munitions experts conducted a site visit immediately following the hurricane from Pilot Avenue to the groin south of the former fishing pier. They searched for munitions between the seawall and the water's edge at low tide. The team also used magnetometers to inspect areas where munitions were removed during the Phase 1 investigation in May 2003. No munitions items were detected by the Corps during this inspection or by the City of Hampton during cleanup efforts after the hurricane.

No munitions were found on Buckroe Beach during the 2003 beach season or after Hurricane Isabel!

What Are Munitions?

Munitions (ordnance) refers to military ammunition, components, or explosives.



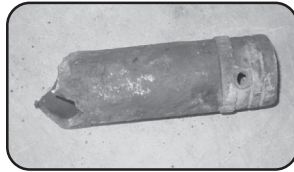
76mm anti-aircraft projectile (12"x3")

Why Is This Necessary?

This effort is being conducted to ensure public safety at Buckroe Beach. The Environmental Protection Agency requested that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers respond to four 76mm munitions items that were found by local metal detector hobbyists in the summer of 2002 at Buckroe Beach. The munitions were buried in 12 to 18 inches of sand in shallow water. The munitions items resemble large bullets or rusty pipes and are approximately 12 inches long and 3 inches in diameter. A 1990 beach replenishment effort is believed to have inadvertently dredged offshore sand containing the munitions from an area that was previously used for military training. The munitions items found at Buckroe Beach were used during World War I and II for coastal defense and are no longer used by the military.

Phase 2 Munitions Study Findings

The second phase of the munitions investigation at Buckroe Beach was completed between November 2 and December 21, 2003. The study included approximately 19 acres of public beach from Pilot Avenue to the former fishing pier from the edge of the boardwalk out to the shallow surf zone to a water depth of 36 inches at Mean Low Water (MLW). The objective of Phase 2 was to safely identify, locate, and remove all munitions items to a depth of 36 inches.



76mm sandfilled shrapnel

During Phase 2, eight munitions items were found and removed by the Army Corps including six 75mm empty shrapnel rounds and two 76mm sandfilled practice rounds. None of these items contained explosive material. The field crew also investigated sand near the 2 groins. No munitions were found at the groins or in the shallow surf zone. Army Corps field crews used an EM-61 geophysical sensor and hand held magnetometers to locate and excavate 579 anomalies (buried objects). This equipment can reliably detect munitions items to depths of 36 inches. Hand held magnetometers were also used in the shallow surf in 18 to 36 inches of water at Mean Low Water.

Immediate Safety Measures & Restrictions

The city has prohibited digging on the beach below 6 inches and the use of metal detectors until the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can complete the Phase 3 study.

In the unlikely event that a munitions item is found on the beach, the City's park personnel will secure the area and notify the fire department and the Army Corps. The Army Corps will coordinate with the interagency team to safely remove the item.

Currently Prohibited:
1. Digging on the Beach
2. Metal Detectors

Safety Tips:

Treat any suspect item with caution. If you encounter a suspect item:

- **Do not touch it, move it, or disturb it!**
- Note the location of the item.
- Call 911 to report it.
- Contact a lifeguard or park ranger (if present) to secure the area.

Public Information

The interagency team will keep the community informed throughout this effort using a variety of methods such as signs on the beach, the project web site, civic association briefings, mailings, public meetings, and media updates.

Community Interview Questionnaire:

www.ce-com.com/buckroe

Project Web Site:

www.nao.usace.army.mil/Projects/Buckroe/buckroe.html

Public Information Repository:

Hampton Public Library
4207 Victoria Blvd. Hampton, VA 23660

Agency Coordination

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is coordinating this effort with the city of Hampton, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Points of Contact:

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